

PURPOSE: This document provides guidance on DHH's policy regarding renewal of Water and Wastewater certificates and enforcement of OPH rules on late fees in the State of Louisiana. This policy serves to establish consistent procedures for certificate renewal and for the charging of late fees for water and wastewater licenses compliant with all applicable laws and regulations of the Office of Public Health – Engineering Services Section.

I. General Information:

In order to maintain staff, equipment and supplies for the Operator Certification program, a system of fees was implemented to help fund the program. These fees include exam fees, license fees, duplicate fees, renewal fees and late fees.

II. Purpose of Renewal Fees and Late Fees:

The Operator Certification Program issues licenses which must be renewed at the beginning of each new cycle. The cycles run from January 1 of the even year to December 31 of the odd year. Renewal invoices are sent out once the cycle has ended and all records for the previous cycle have been closed out utilizing the Operator Certification System (OCS).

The OCS closeout routine determines eligibility to renew licenses based upon meeting the minimum continuing education requirement for each license. Any licenses for which these eligibility requirements are not met are inactivated as part of the closeout procedure.

A renewal invoice is mailed out to each operator for licenses that are eligible for renewal. This is normally done during the month of February. The due date for the payment of the renewal is normally set as April 1 to provide operators at least thirty (30) days to submit their renewal payments.

The charging of late fees for license renewal is required to comply with La. Revised Statute 40:6(E) which states:

In addition to a criminal prosecution, to assist in collection of license or permit renewals, the Department of Health and Hospitals, office of public health, shall assess late charges for failure to timely renew licenses or permits issued by the Department of Health and Hospitals, office of public health, which late fees shall be ten percent of the license or permit fee, but no more than one hundred dollars, if paid to and received by the Department of Health and Hospitals after thirty days of the due date, and if not paid and received within ninety days of the due date, the renewal fee late charge shall be equal to the original renewal fee.

III. Minimum Requirements for Renewal Fees:

In order to be eligible for renewal an operator must have met the continuing education requirements for the previous cycle and must have paid the renewal fee for the previous cycle. Those operators who did meet the minimum continuing education requirement for the previous cycle but did not pay renewal fees during the previous cycle will have their certificates inactivated. These certificates may be reactivated upon receipt of renewal fees, both current and those in arrears including late fees,

provided this payment is received before the end of the current cycle. If these payments are not received before the end of the current cycle, the certificates shall remain permanently inactive.

Those operators who meet the continuing education requirement for the previous cycle will have an invoice generated after the closeout routine is run by the OCS program. The due date will be established to provide at least thirty days for payment of their renewal invoices or April 1st, whichever is later. This means renewals will be past due by ninety (90) days on July 1st of the even year of each new cycle.

In accordance with La. R.S. 40:6(E), a late fee will be assessed. Invoices paid thirty days after the due date (estimated to be April 1st of the even year) will require a late fee payment of 10% added to the invoice. Invoices paid ninety (90) days after the due date will require a late fee payment equal to the original fee added to the invoice. This will generally occur on July 1st when the due date is set on April 1st.